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FROM THE FRONT TO PARTY: REVOLUTIONARY TRANSFORMATIONS

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FRELIMO FROM FRONT TO PARTY: REVOLUTIONARY TRANSFORMATIONS

Introduction

Any analysis attempting to explain the class nature of the nationalist movement in Mozambique has to confront the need to concretely define its own analytical parameters. The study of the nationalist movement in Mozambique can not be reduced to an analysis of FRELIMO. Even an analysis of a movement as one which guided the nationalist victory and led to the proclamation of national independence can not be conducted without studying the general situation in the country. Yet such an approach becomes more difficult in a case where the movement which directed the nationalist struggle became a party in power.

A rapid review of the histories of communist parties in power, shows that there is a tendency for them to write their history in isolation from the dominant social and political context. The Party becomes an entity in itself which directs and conditions the evolution of the entire society. Important problems such as divergent conceptions within the Party, its contradictions, internal differences, errors in application of certain policies, tend to be ignored, thus running the same kind of risks as those incurred by certain official histories.

Another kind of analysis generally produced by researchers who are a little isolated from the problems of this type of party persists in treating them in terms of other struggles. Thus, for them, the important problems are the pro-Chinese, pro-Soviet or pro-Western influences inside FRELIMO.

These are the indications which allow us to briefly characterise the different approaches to analysing FRELIMO. Nevertheless, it seems possible to us to follow a line which enables us to capture the evolution of the nationalist movement, the formation of FRELIMO and its subsequent transformations and development as a Marxist-Leninist party, in close relation to the evolution of Mozambican society at different periods. The History Workshop (OFICINA DE HISTÓRIA) of the CEA is attempting to produce work which treats the history of the Party in its social context, as an aspect of the Mozambican historical process.

Before anything else and in order to avoid falling into such stereotypical analysis, it is important to devote some attention to the specific history of FRELIMO.

Unfortunately, because of the lack of knowledge of that history, there is a tendency, especially among Western scholars, to approach FRELIMO's history by approximations, extrapolations of all kinds. This kind of exercise was already practiced by the Portuguese colonizers, when they claimed FRELIMO to be merely the result of the "corrupting" influence of some communist elements inside the movement.

The Founding of FRELIMO

More than twenty years after the founding of FRELIMO, how should one go about analysing its class basis? Must the question address itself to the social origins of the leadership, or to the moving forces of the armed struggle? Presumably, it is neither one nor the other, but rather the interplay of all the forces that were called upon to unite and struggle against Portuguese colonialism.

This essay's aim is to provide some elements which can be used to understand the process and contradictions that FRELIMO has been going through not only since 1975, but since its inception. At the moment it would be presumptuous to pretend to be able to offer an all-encompassing analysis, because such an analysis would require a mastery of the data that we do yet not have.

In the case of FRELIMO, the question of class forces in play is complicated by the fact that almost from the start contradictions emerged with regard to the conception of the struggle for independence. Clearly a few individuals in the leadership knew that their struggle had to go beyond mere flag independence, which was all that was being granted to most former colonies in Africa. It was already clear by 1962 that even the radical nationalism of Lumumba had to be squashed by physically liquidating the man whose death was to become the symbol of the colonialists' intransigence throughout the continent. From the start within FRELIMO there existed a conception of a struggle leading to socialism, as indicated by the stated general objective of struggling to put an end to the exploitation of man by man.

FRELIMO was founded by people coming from different positions within Mozambican society: workers, peasants, rich peasants, petty bourgeois intellectuals and civil servants, traditional chiefs and so on. In retrospect, to have achieved a united front under the then prevailing circumstances must be seen as revolutionary tour de force that owes a great deal to E. Mondlane's personal qualities and the support he received from the President of TANU and Tanganyika, J. Nyerere.

The extent of the ^{success} of Mondlane, Marcelino dos Santos and other leaders in achieving unity, can be seen if one examines the diverse social bases from which FRELIMO was able to draw support.

The class structure of colonial Mozambique was regionally differentiated between the North, Centre and South. In all 3 cases the penetration of colonial capitalism had generated a process of proletarianization, but the extent and form of this process varied in each region, as a result of state policies. (1)

In the south, proletarianization had gone furthest because of the very strong integration into the S.A. economy. However, within the peasantry a small stratum was able to use mine wages (for example if they were "boss boys") to invest in agriculture, which constituted a process of class differentiation within the peasantry.

The generally low level of mine wages created great rural poverty among the masses of the peasantry which was exacerbated by the exploitation by the richer peasants. This situation was complicated by the subsequent arrival of the colonos (Portuguese settlers brought out by the government and provided with clothing, the best land and means of production). This temporarily disrupted the class differentiation within the African peasantry.

Nevertheless, this process continued and later on in response to the aspirations of this class the government introduced a new agricultural policy favouring co-operatives, in an attempt to coopt this class for colonialism.

In the Centre just as in the North and South, labour migration had a direct impact on the process of proletarianization. In all 3 regions, this was related to the use of forced labour to secure labour power for those projects which were deemed high priority by the government. Specifically in the Center the private plantation companies recruited labour on a ⁶ monthly contract basis (2)

This kind of contract, which illegally included continuous 12 to 13 hour work-days without a lunch break, meant that the labourer was too tired to undertake many basic tasks on his own family farm (machamba familiar). Consequently, the productive capacities of these family farms declined, a situation made worse by the frequent use of xibalo during the 6 months period of "rest" from the plantation. This class structure was thus associated with a very low standards of living ^{under} highly repressive political conditions.

With regard to the process of differentiation, it is difficult to provide an overall characterization because the "Centre" remains a very provisional concept. Most of the conclusions drawn so far, are based on studies which focused on geographical areas where the plantations were concentrated. (3)

The North is generally considered as the zone least affected by Portuguese influence. In fact, proletarianization had started in 1930's. This took place through the introduction of forced cotton production and forced recruitment to the sisal estates (for example M'Panga) coupled as usual with xibalo for road construction. Conditions were so bad that many peasants fled to the sisal estates in Tanganyika, in search of better working conditions and wages. (4)

As in the South, but on a lower scale, migration abroad gave certain peasants a basis for accumulating capital upon their return to Mozambique. Another source of differentiation was the impact of the colonial church and state which gave rise to a very small stratum of teachers, state employees and so on, who used part of their regular salaries in small scale commercial ventures.

The result of these regional differences in the class structure was that, for example, the petty bourgeoisie in Beira was different from that in Lourenço Marques. Such differences often coincided with ethnic differences which were played upon by the colonial state and against which FRELIMO had to struggle through its attacks on tribalism and insistence on national unity.

This was the class structure in the 1950's when the colonial state confronted a series of difficulties such as hunger in the countryside, and open protests including strikes (1957/58).

Internationally Portugal could not fail to notice the growth of nationalist movements such as Mau-Mau in Kenya (1950/52). F.L.N. in Algeria (1954) and the Bandung Conference (1955):

The colonial state responded by introducing new policies which were designed to foster the integration of the rich peasantry into state sponsored cooperatives. In addition, some measures were introduced to restructure peasant production by introducing ruralatos, (regrouping the population around water, roads, fertile land and so on), and picadas (rural dirt roads along which were organised separate plots for cash crop production and peasant food crops). The aims of such policies were firstly to increase production, and secondly to win some support by granting privileges to a small section of the peasantry.

In the cities, oppression and racial discrimination were coupled with attempts to stimulate the formation of artisanal producers' cooperatives and to incorporate black Mozambicans into at least the lower levels of state administration. In certain services, such as hospitals, black Mozambicans were tolerated in certain technical posts although they still suffered discrimination. (5)

Such policies were inevitably self-contradictory both in the country side, and in the cities, in that a majority which did not receive these privileges

resented them, and many of the beneficiaries still remained subject to racial discrimination and other forms of oppression. Consequently even among this small group, only some were ideologically committed to the colonial state while others vacillated and still others were opposed to it. Even the same person could go through all these positions over a period of time. This is the social context in which FRELIMO was founded.

X One of the dominant figures of FRELIMO in 1962, next to E. Mondlane, was undoubtedly L. Nkavandame. L. Nkavandame's social and political base straddled the province of Cabo Delgado and Southern Tanganyika. Like many other Mozambicans before, he had fled Mozambique to seek better paying jobs in Tanganyika. After starting as a worker in a sisal plantation in southern Tanganyika, he rose to the position of "foreman".

Within a relatively short period, through accumulated savings, he was able to operate as a small capitalist, entering into the transport sector with two trucks to increase his earnings. Politically, he became a card carrying member of TANU, and through it began to see the political use that could be made from the gains achieved at the economic level. It seems clear that he drew from the Tanganyikan experience in the cooperative movement to set up his own cooperative movement in Cabo Delgado. As in Tanganyika he wanted to use that kind of social and economic base to build a nationalist movement. And, as in Tanganyika the colonizers were divided on whether or not to let him go ahead. (6)

Among Mozambicans from Cabo Delgado, Nkavandame's political position seemed unshakeable. Moreover, the fact that he came from the same ethnic group, the Makonde, reinforced his prestige among the Mozambican nationalist figures. Yet, while Nkavandame could claim a basis among the migrant workers, he had clearly moved away from that class. As a rich peasant on the rise within a colonial state which was beginning to see the necessity of being accommodating to at least a section of the colonized people, he saw himself, as the legitimate representative of the Africans: legitimate because he was socially and economically the most prominent of the Makonde.

This political and economic prominence was created by the exploitation of Mozambicans who had joined the SAAVM (The Voluntary African Cotton Society of Mozambique) which provided a less oppressive form of integration into the colonial economy. It enabled peasants to escape Xibalo and it enabled them to organize their cash crop production independently of the colonial administration. Despite the fact that this form of organization led to increased production, the colonial administration was divided as to whether or not to encourage this society.

Even before the founding of FRELIMO there existed a nationalist movement, but it consisted of a series of organizations, namely: UDENAMO, MANU, UNAMI. These had grown out of mutual aid societies and other workers' organizations which had previously arisen in the various countries in the region. Because of Portuguese repression many of them had only tenuous links with Mozambique itself, and their political development was hence heavily influenced by the nationalist movements in the various host countries. These weaknesses constituted the main problem which the founders of FRELIMO knew they had to overcome. Because of these contradictions the creation of FRELIMO entailed a critical analysis of the organisations as a prelude to the necessary political ground-work for their unification into a new movement.

As a result of this work soon after FRELIMO was formed many leaders of the former organisations abandoned FRELIMO and tried without success to recreate their old political basis.

In this situation where some of the old contradictions had been resolved, the scene was set for new ones to arise, as occurred at the 1st Congress. What is known so far is that there arose during the Congress, contradictory conceptions of how to go about getting rid of Portuguese colonialism. Nowadays, the armed struggle is often looked at as a mere fact, something that started in 1964. Yet, at the First Congress the question of the armed struggle had not been resolved with unanimity, and so in the statutes it appeared in the disguised language of using "any means necessary" to overthrow Portuguese colonialism.

Once the armed struggle was decided upon, its mode of conduct, in turn, became a cause for struggle. In other words, within FRELIMO a process had started by which two main contradictory conceptions of how to defeat Portuguese colonialism were beginning to take shape. (7)

This does not mean that these two contradictory positions existed as such from the beginning. The contradiction that is later described as the two-line struggle was one which emerged with clarity only after the death of E. Mondlane, at the Central Committee meeting of October 1969. Today, with hindsight it is of course easy to see the roots of these contradictions all the way back to before the 1st Congress. Clearly, at the beginning, the diverse conceptions of the struggle that were advanced were simply seen as different. It was the process of armed struggle itself that slowly transformed these differences into antagonistic ones. Similarly, it was those who carried the brunt of the fighting, the people of Cabo Delgado, Niassa and later Tete who were also the moving forces

in the process of ideologically and politically transforming FRELIMO into a Front increasingly identified with the class interests of the working masses. This increasing identification resulted from struggles that had to be fought and won. Such resolved contradictions, such political and ideological victories brought to the surface, as always, new contradictions and/or old ones under new forms.

Consequently any analysis of the class basis of FRELIMO must approach the problem as a process. What appears to later observers as an achieved state of affairs, as a fact, is always the end result of a process of political struggle. A particular political position is not a given, but the result of concrete economic, political and ideological struggles. The gains achieved through these struggles can never be considered irreversible.

This point is important not only because the process that was started in 1962 is still going on, but also because it forces the observer to analyze FRELIMO on the basis of that concrete process and not on the basis of some abstract, pre-conceived notions derived from what revolutionary movements are supposed to be or do ... in order to be revolutionary. The material for theorizing FRELIMO's struggle must be drawn from that concrete struggle.

Given that the class basis of FRELIMO is something which has been constantly struggled for and therefore constantly under transformation, an analysis which does justice to this process cannot focus on or privilege any single moment of that process. What follows then is an attempt to examine how inside FRELIMO, the struggling class forces clarified their ideological and political positions, how they went from mere divergences to antagonisms, how they expressed themselves at different phases, in different sectors. To deal with these issues the Congresses will be used as points of reference. Each Congress could be seen as bringing about a partial restructuring of the contradictions, but no Congress in itself brought contradictions to a head. For example, it was only after the 1st Congress that the armed struggle was fully decided upon. Even then there immediately arose opposite views as to what kind of armed struggle: for one side, the important question was to achieve military victory as quickly as possible, while the other side considered the political victory just as, if not more important, and that speed was not crucial. Thus, while this paper uses the Congresses as a focal point of analysis, the Congresses must be seen in the context of the events preceding and following them.

THE SECOND CONGRESS (JULY 1968); from national unity to unity for socialism

The FRELIMO of 1962 was not that of 1964, of 1968 or of 1970. Long before the Third Congress, in fact right after the Second Congress, FRELIMO had grown to the point where its then President, Eduardo Mondlane, could declare that there was no doubt in his mind that FRELIMO was well on its way to becoming a Marxist-Leninist Party. (8)

In order to understand this it is necessary to analyse developments preceding and following the 2nd Congress.

A few months after the beginning of the Armed Struggle, FRELIMO found itself confronted with the task of organizing areas which had been abandoned by the Portuguese. The areas where FRELIMO had not yet organized its own administration were known as semi-liberated zones. From 1965/66 a distinction began to be made between these zones, where the Portuguese had left, but where FRELIMO was still unable to fully organize its own administration and the Liberated Zones, in which FRELIMO had organized an administration which took care of feeding, clothing, caring, teaching and defending the population.

The counter-state that was established in the Liberated Zones was part and parcel of FRELIMO. There was no distinction between the Front and the administrative organization. As it were, FRELIMO was the state, and vice versa. But this situation did not occur overnight and naturally it was achieved through a politico-military struggle. It was through that struggle that FRELIMO achieved the destruction of the old colonial state as well as the construction of a state apparatus run by the people and for the people living in the Liberated Zones. The counter-state apparatus was not an intermediary institution between the Front and the people. It is worth repeating and insisting that this situation which is today taken as a simple historical fact was itself the result of a protracted struggle between two contradictory conceptions of guerrilla war and power.

Moreover this transformation was not achieved just through the military struggle. It will be remembered that even when the Liberated Zones were created, there were forces within FRELIMO which felt that FRELIMO had to preoccupy itself with the military and technical aspect of the struggle, and others would take care of the political organization.

Indeed up to the 2nd Congress the internal organization of the Liberated Zones was more or less bi-cephalous with the departamento da Interior (whose head was L. Nkavandame) and the departamento da defesa (first headed by F.S. Magaya and later by S. Machel) competing for political supremacy. Thus, in Cabo Delgado, it could be argued that an attempt (by Nkavandame and his followers) was made to introduce a state structure similar to the colonial one. The terms of the debate, and of the contradiction were not between those who thought

that the Front had to have pre-eminence over an embryonic state, and those who disagreed. Rather the contradiction was between two conceptions of armed struggle, of political power and where it arose from. And one could say without oversimplification that these are the contradictions which continue to be on the agenda today, but manifesting themselves under different forms.

The difference in conceptions can be concretely illustrated by Nkavandame's refusal to allow the populations in the Liberated Zones to supply food to the soldiers. The conception that political and economic matters were separate from military ones thus led to serious tensions within FRELIMO. By the 2nd Congress, these tensions reached the point that Nkavandame and some of the "Chairmen" refused to attend it.

At the time of the 1st Congress such a refusal would have been devastating because in 1962 Nkavandame's position was so strong that if he left a meeting he had to be cajoled into returning for the meeting to be continued. By 1968, however, the balance of forces had changed. The Congress was the culmination point of a process of unifying a new leadership of "politico-militares" although this leadership did not see itself as ousting Nkavandame, but rather as overcoming the division between political and military matters.

The success achieved by the election of the "politico-militares" was the result of two processes which had been going on inside FRELIMO. The first process was the unification of political ^{and} military training combined with an emphasis on production which had been started in 1964 in Kongwa and was continued in 1965 in Nachingwea. This provided a leadership which was ideologically prepared to listen to grievances from the base. Secondly, there had been a growing series of protests coming from the peasant base concerning Nkavandame and the group that came to be called the "New Exploiters". When FRELIMO had opened up a series of supply centres in the Liberated Zones, Nkavandame was able to use his experience from the former cooperatives to transform them almost immediately into a de facto private commercial network. Although these were later called lojas do povo ("people's shops") in fact, they provided a profit for this group and constituted one of the main reasons why this group was so insistent upon the distinction between military matters on the one hand and political and economic matters on the other. The refusal to supply food to the soldiers was entirely a self interested action.

This peasant protest could only be mobilized effectively because the leadership took the crucial step of insuring that there was heavy peasant representation at the 2nd Congress.

Hence the 2nd Congress consolidated the links between FRELIMO and its main class basis: the poor peasantry. In this context it is easier to understand

Mondlane's remarks after the Congress that FRELIMO was on the point of becoming a Marxist-Leninist Party.

The election of the "politico-militares" and peasants to an enlarged Central Committee radically altered the balance of forces in FRELIMO, and had effects in two important respects in the period following the 2nd Congress. Firstly, it placed Nkavandame in the position where he faced a "natural" majority against his line within the Central Committee and FRELIMO as a whole. Consequently his defection to the enemy was in a sense a "natural" outcome if he were not to abandon their class line favouring his own capitalist accumulation. Secondly, it laid the political and organisational basis within FRELIMO for transforming the political, economic and military conditions under which the Armed Struggle was conducted.

The expulsion of Nkavandame from the Central Committee in October 1969 dealt a body blow to those forces which saw in FRELIMO a means to replace white capitalists with black ones. However, there still remained political and ideological space for an apparently radical form of cultural nationalism favouring "Black Power". The major exponent of this line, was U.T. Simango. His political influence had already been greater than Nkavandame's at the 2nd Congress, at which he had been reelected vice-President. This institutional position gave him a platform for his ideology and in itself the ideology was difficult to combat. His insistence on placing black Mozambicans in leadership positions, including the removal of all whites from the Mozambican Institute in Dar-es-Salaam, struck a responsive chord not only within the FRELIMO rank and file, but also in the African diplomatic front. Furthermore it was comparatively easy for him initially to dismiss all opponents of this line as foreigners or else as a clique from the South. (9)

Following the 2nd Congress, there was an increased and continuing effort to transform production, an effort reflected in a series of organisational changes in the Central departments of FRELIMO. These reorganisations attempted to make both production and the distribution of goods to the population more effective. This effort had started even before the 2nd Congress as a result of the experience of Nachingwea. Over the period up to 1974 there gradually developed an economy based on the articulation of 3 kinds of production units.

The first of these were machambas das Forças Populares, which were farms run by soldiers at the main military bases. A variant form of this was joint production by peasants and soldiers on the same plot. The second kind of production unit was the artisanal producer cooperative which frequently also included cooperative agricultural production. The third was the machamba familiar which also supplied food to the armed forces. (10)

For military reasons, but with economic effects, FRELIMO had reorganized agricultural production in various ways which integrated these different types of farms into a single system. For example, the dispersal of machambas familiares to avoid aerial bombing entailed a better organisation both to deliver factors of production to the machambas and to deliver the crops to the soldiers or export them. Similarly the hiding of grain stores to safeguard against surprise attacks meant a careful planning system to handle reserves and to supply food regularly to the armed forces. (10)

While the machambas familiares were not in themselves a socialised form of production, the reorganisation and integration into FRELIMO's military-economic planning system meant that their production was to a certain extent socialised. Furthermore, the evidence available so far suggests that cooperative forms of production were slowly growing in importance in the years 1970-74 (a comparatively short period in terms of agricultural production cycles).

At the time this was more than simply a logistical exercise for military ends. The conditions of this kind of economic planning were above all political. For example, the supplying of food to the troops was a form of tax in kind which depended on political support for the Armed Struggle. Such a tax did not in itself socialize production, but provided a basis for developing social forms of consumption such as health care and education.

It is reasonable to conclude that political mobilization was achieved through the de facto organisation of a planned economy around the central objective of the Armed Struggle, yet in a manner which directly responded to the needs of the mass of the peasantry. In 1972, new lojas do Povo, were introduced in the Liberated Zones. These distribution centers were one of the fruits of the effort to transform production and contrasted sharply with the shops belonging to the "New Exploiters" of Nkavandame's time. These economic transformations amounted to a new class line which restructured class relations in favour of the mass of the peasantry, thus reinforcing the class basis of support for FRELIMO. In contrast to the famous conception which sees the guerilla fighter operating among the people as a fish in water, one could say that FRELIMO was the kind of fish which transformed the water it swam in.

An excellent illustration of the organizational economic and political success of such measures was the ability of FRELIMO to withstand the 2 year "Gordian Knot" offensive, the most expensive single offensive mounted by the Portuguese in defence of their colonies.

The defeat of the "Gordian Knot" operation gave further impetus to the growing realization in Portuguese military circles that a military victory could not be achieved in the colonies. It thus contributed to the process that led to the April 25, 1974 military coup.

The Third Congress and the question of the definition of the enemy

The situation confronted by FRELIMO in 1977 was much more complex than at any other time in its history.

For a Front that had always insisted on the correct definition of the enemy, that period was, indeed an extremely difficult one. Raimurdo Pachinuapa, then Governor of Cabo Delgado, when asked how the enemy had been manifesting himself in Cabo Delgado was hard put to answer:

His action has been slow which makes it quite difficult to detect and neutralize him (Noticias 4.1.77).

The problem was complex because "defining the enemy" implied both identifying and characterising it in class terms. Independence for FRELIMO did not mean the end of the war since it had committed itself to support the Zimbabwe freedom fighters in their struggle against the Smith regime. Because of this situation, it seemed logical to concentrate all economic and political efforts on combatting the agents of the Smith's regime. In this situation it was thus entirely natural that the enemy was often defined as an infiltrator. There was a tendency to overlook the fact that many of these "agents of the enemy" were by products of the revolution and were not planted agents of the enemy. It was their enmity toward FRELIMO which made them link with foreign enemies. Some of the internal enemies had been opposed to FRELIMO for a long time, but their basis for action was radically changed by Independence; just as the Front was transformed through and by the struggle, so too, was the enemy.

The problem of defining the enemy was compounded by the fact that FRELIMO was forced to operate in a context and with instruments of power which were not entirely of its own creation. In other words, FRELIMO found itself having to operate a state apparatus which had not been forged simply to serve the interests of the working masses. To understand this it is necessary to examine the effects of the political situation created by Independence on the class structure. At Independence various attempts were made to construct new parties which would either substitute for FRELIMO or govern with it in a multi-party system. The leadership of these parties were frequently former defectors from FRELIMO and/or PIDE agents.⁽¹¹⁾ When these attempts failed, there was a flight of the Colonos, starting with the most important ones but continuing for about 3 years. While the objective of this was mainly economic disruption (which is why it was combined with extensive economic sabotage) the main effect of this flight in class terms was to open up opportunities for different ethnic groups to move into capitalist agriculture, commerce and more responsible positions within both private state and large scale enterprises.

Faced with this situation FRELIMO had to take over the running of many enterprises. This had various effects. It led to a growth in the size of the state apparatus, and to the incorporation within it of elements who were often politically and ideologically opposed to FRELIMO, but who were seen as technically competent (and who indeed tended to support technocratic solutions to problems even though they were not the only sponsors of such solutions). It also led to a considerable reliance on the grupos dinamizadores (g.d., dynamising groups) both to carry out explicitly political functions where FRELIMO was unable to do so and to maintain production as far as possible by helping to run various state and private enterprises. Hence, within the state, FRELIMO faced a situation analogous to that prior to the 2nd Congress, where the Departamento do Interior had in effect been a form of state administration not fully controlled by FRELIMO and in part conducted on principles opposed to those of FRELIMO. Similarly, the grupos dinamizadores at this time were a very contradictory phenomenon, characterised by a whole series of different internal struggles, whose role in promoting some kind of democratic participation in production and administration was in some places important, but whose activities, while often vital to keeping enterprises open, often bore an ambiguous relation to FRELIMO's objectives.

FRELIMO canalized the massive popular support it enjoyed through the grupos dinamizadores which were meant to act as popular vigilance groups at both place of work & residence. The role of the g.d., from April 1974 to and beyond 1977 when they began to be replaced by Party cells, was fundamental in that it allowed FRELIMO to maintain, however tenuously, an organizational link with the working masses. With Independence, FRELIMO faced a new situation, which it had brought about, but which it did not on its own have the means to dominate. And the g.d. were, in part, a way of giving itself those means. More importantly, like the struggle that made possible the Liberated Zones, Independence brought about a new arena in which new exploiters, under the banner of FRELIMO, were, in fact if not consciously, given room to flourish.

However, the development of the state apparatus was not simply because of factors beyond FRELIMO's direct control. Right from 1975 nationalisations (of the health and education systems, for example) had been undertaken with a view to implementing new social policies. Hence the state was also partially transformed in a manner favouring the class line of FRELIMO and likely to secure the class basis of its support, and attempts were made to secure democratic forms of organisation within this growing state (for example, ward councils in hospitals). Similarly the establishment of state-run lojas do povo was part of an attempt to extend the experience of the Liberated Zones to the parts of the country which FRELIMO

(12)
had not controlled before Independence. Hence the growth of the state apparatus had contradictory effects of both partially transforming it in a pro-socialist direction and giving a new set of positions to defend to a rising petit bourgeoisie (whose political attitudes had been formed under colonial fascism, through policies such as that of promoção social in the 1960s).

When FRELIMO created the vanguard Party in 1977 it was in fact the formalization of a situation which already existed at the level of the People's Army. After the Gordian Knot offensive in 1972, Marxist study groups were created in the Army. They operated like party cells through study and discussion of how best to defend the interests of the masses. Thus the creation of the party was very much an extension of a process which had been on the way for some years.

There is a little known text which illustrates quite well the process of transformation of FRELIMO from Front to Party. This text (The party is born from our struggle) was published in installments in Notícias from the end of April 1978 to the end of May of the same year.

It starts as follows:

FRELIMO a new kind of party, whose ideology is Marxism-Leninism, was created on February 3, 1977 at the III Congress. Till then existed FRELIMO- Frente de Libertação de Moçambique.

But is it that this party is a totally new creation which has nothing to do with FRELIMO, an organization which united, mobilized and directed the Mozambican people in its heroic struggle against Portuguese colonialism?

No. And it is for that reason that we say that the party was born from our struggle, the struggle of the Mozambican people. (13)

The preoccupation with maintaining close links with the masses had been a constant one and with the creation of the vanguard party in 1977, this aspect was insisted upon when defining what was understood by vanguard:

The vanguard is not an elite. An elite is a gang of bourgeois intellectuals who consider themselves superior to the working masses and are contemptuous of them. It is that class that Joana Simeão (a defector from FRELIMO who was one of the leaders of the "rival" parties at the time of Independence) called "the thinking class" thereby saying that society is divided into two groups: a minority of scholars who were born to govern and decide everything and a majority incapable of thinking, made to obey and work under the orders and in favour of the minority...

The vanguard is born from the working masses, lives in the middle of the masses, learns from the working masses ... (explanation of the 4th thesis to the 3rd Congress, Notícias, 5.1.77).

Thus creation of the vanguard party in 1977 was an attempt to cope with the contradiction faced by FRELIMO which had to operate within the infrastructures inherited from the colonial state. It was also an attempt to fuse into one the two different processes that had resulted from the successes of the Armed Struggle. On the one hand, in the areas where the Portuguese colonialists had

left, FRELIMO had been able to build a counter-state based on people's power. In those areas, the Liberated Zones, FRELIMO had already advanced toward building popular democracy, whereas in the other areas, the process had not gone beyond the level of the national democratic revolution, that is, both the traditions and institutions of a more thorough-going democracy had yet to be built there.

In advancing the concept of the vanguard party, the FRELIMO leadership was clearly drawing from its own history, as explained in the study of the 4th thesis to the III Congress (on the creation of the vanguard party) which "shows us that in its development, along with the creation of the vanguard party, one must preserve consolidate and enlarge the broad patriotic and anti-imperialist front... The vanguard party leads the working masses, but cannot substitute itself for them, and neither can it act instead of the working masses. It is the people and the people alone who build history" (Noticias 5.1.77).

Moreover, this conception of the vanguard was not something new. It is closely linked to a conception of revolutionary struggle which has been constantly fought for within FRELIMO, namely that the revolution must be carried out by the working class, an approach exemplified by FRELIMO's selection procedures. In 1977 when the campaign to restructure the Party began, the aim was to draw in vanguard workers, the best workers. Their candidature was voluntary and was then discussed by all the candidate's fellow-workers. The criteria for admission were social and political comportment.

This view of mass participation was repeated over and over. One example of it can be found in an editorial of Mozambique Revolution in 1966. Under the title "The African Lesson", it drew attention to what it considered the fundamental cause of K. Nkrumah's overthrow:

fundamentally, it is necessary to encourage the people to participate in the political life of the country; further it is necessary to reject a concept in which the Revolution (socialism) is built by an active nucleus of leaders who think, create and give everything, and who are followed by a passive mass, who limit themselves to receiving and executing. This concept is the result of a weak political conscience and expresses lack of confidence in the fighting and revolutionary capacity of the people... All peoples are basically opposed to the exploitation of man by man. When therefore, in a certain country there is a regime which does not satisfy these aspirations that regime is opposed by the people. The people will fight it.

This long-standing aspect of FRELIMO's ideology meant that the introduction of the vanguard party, was not envisaged as cutting FRELIMO off from its social base, but as a means of retaining its capacity for disciplined action in a situation where many potential members had not been ideologically transformed by the experience of the Armed Struggle. Having a vanguard party enabled FRELIMO to insist on a trial period to assess the political worth of potential members, before fully accepting them. Nevertheless it carried the danger of weakening the link the masses, especially if the party cells did not function well.

The promotion of mass democratic organiza-
tions (ODMS) as well as the creation of Production Councils and the later attempts
to revive the g.d.s. can be seen as organisational forms for retaining a mass
base while not opening the doors of the party to political opportunists.
While this was the prevalent conception, later events showed that the problem
could not be resolved so simply.

The Third Congress, apart from restructuring FRELIMO as a Party, also adopted
an economic programme which provided the basis for a new series of nationalisa-
tions. These were nationalisations which set up the economic preconditions for
socialist planning on a national scale and were followed by the establishment
of the "corresponding" central state planning institutions.⁽¹⁴⁾ The later decision
to make the years 1980-1990 the decade of victory over underdevelopment, with an
economic strategy set out in the Prospective Indicative Plan, (P.P.I.), should
also be understood in the context of the economic programme of the Third Con-
gress. These later measures also reflected the optimism felt with the appoa-
ching end of the war against the Smith regime.

A great deal of resources had been devoted to this war and at the time it
seemed that with the inauguration of a period of peace these investments funds
could be channelled into developing the Mozambican economy. In retrospect it
can be seen that such optimism ignored the effects of growing financial problems
which were partly related to South African government's unilateral revocation
of the agreement concerning migrant labour to the mines which was a source of
foreign exchange.⁽¹⁵⁾ The period of peace never materialized either, because of the
activities of the M.N.R. (Movimento Nacional de Resistência, known as bandos
armados in Mozambique).

Quite apart from these international aspects, it is clear that the period
before and after the 3rd Congress over-emphasized the technical aspects of
problems, with a converse under-emphasis on the political aspects. One of the
exceptions to this is the already mentioned case of the ward councils in the
hospitals which could be considered exemplarily cases of poder popular (people's
power).

During and after the Third Congress decisions to further people's power
foundered because they were not implemented. In many respects the political and
organisational offensive which started in 1979 could be seen as an attempt to
overcome such difficulties.

However in its initial forms, which consisted of personal visits by
the President, it tended to concentrate on strengthening discipline
and uncovering sabotage as a way of breaking bureaucratic bottlenecks.

These visits were intended as a way of opening up a process of criticism of
the existing situation of nepotism, abuse of power, indiscipline, lack of
not only

respect for the people, ^{also} but to a certain extent of the state apparatus as a whole. This approach did in fact mobilise massive support in the first year or so, but this was not followed through by appropriate institutional changes in the state apparatus. Many of the decisions taken to strengthen popular power were taken out the context. Many transformed the offensive into a merely bureaucratic and disciplinary exercise. For many the symbol was the broom in the sense of literally tidying up. For others the offensive was an occasion for metaphorically sweeping things under the carpet. (16)

A good example of the problems faced in the actual implementation of popular power is given by 2 different speeches of the President at the Central Hospital in Maputo in 1976 and 1979. The first speech launched the idea of the ward councils, while the other one included a critique of ultra-leftism which led to a lack of respect for hierarchical positions. Instead of these speeches being seen as complementary, the second was seen as negating the first and had a much greater strategic impact. To understand the differential impact of the two speeches, one must remember that these presidential interventions and other party orientations are delivered in the context of social and on going class struggle. Each of the social forces present in the given situation will use such interventions to further their own interests.

At the start of the offensive the principal obstacle seemed to be the inability of the Party to effectively implement its objectives through the state apparatus. Assuming this is the way to approach the problem, it would not be difficult to document that inability. Speaking on that very point, the President pointed out that the difference between the situation today and that in 1967/9 is passivity. (17) But it could be argued that the problem is not passivity, but rather a kind of stalemate provoked by the coexistence of two main conflicting practices of powers.

Throughout the organizational and political (and one might add ideological) offensive, these two conflicting practices manifested themselves in various ways both within the Party and the state.

Unfortunately, in the references to the organizational and political offensive, there has been a tendency to see it in linear terms, that is, as the manifestation of the revolutionary popular and democratic line within FRELIMO. This it certainly was, but it would be idealistic to think of it as being only that. While the call for discipline is necessary, when, as happened at times, it became an insistent formalism, it inevitably had a detrimental impact on the creative ability of the people.

THE FOURTH CONGRESS: The struggle to reinforce popular power

What the history of FRELIMO has shown, despite statements to the contrary, is that the revolutionary popular and democratic nature of the struggle is always in question. The revolutionary gains are not, by definition, irreversible. The various transformations taking place need to be analysed in relation to the objective of the worker-peasant alliance winning and retaining power. The forces accounting for such transformations must be the main object of analysis: in the case of Mozambique, the main forces to be considered are the different classes, the Party and the mass democratic organisations, and the state.

In the period leading up to the 4th Congress a set of steps were taken from which emerged the new guide lines for the implementation of effective popular power. These included a critique of former practices and a recognition of the need to correct them, and to modify the style of work in both the Party and the state. These were coupled with increased attention devoted to the resolution of problems of food supply and its distribution to the population (end of the lojas do povo, introduction of a rationing system to ensure equal access to the basic goods). These were the main themes which structured the debates which preceded the 4th Congress and predominated during its proceedings. These will be examined by focussing on the main events and on the state and Party structures that were used as the arenas for discussions. Following the Third Congress in 1978, the process of setting ^{up} the Party cells was begun but in many places their actual functioning was weak from 1979 to 1981. In 1981, a critique was launched concerning the style of work of the Party which was turning it into an island in the middle of society. Special attention was given to the need to study and resolve the day to day problems of the people. The Party needed to insert itself, more effectively at the level of the work places where the administration of the enterprises was hindering the cells' work. A solution to this problem, which was aggravated by the style of work of the cells themselves, was found in the process of "revitalising" the cells by means of an analysis at three levels. Firstly the history of the cell since its foundation secondly its links with the workers and its capacity to respond to their problems and thirdly the comportment of each of its members at work and in their personal lives. This process culminated in the development of a program of action of each cell adapted to the specific situations in which they were acting.

The same concerns were reflected in the offensive that was continuing inside the state apparatus. A development which was very important in terms of its consequences and the nature of the problems raised was the comicio popular (popular rally) of 5 November 1981. This analysed and sharply criticized the state and above all its repressive apparatuses such as security and the police. This critique, which sprang from the political and organisational offensive, launched one of its more important aspects, the offensive of legality.

This kind of action to reinforce popular rights against the repressive aspects of the state was necessary because of the action of the enemy inside the state.

It is not a coincidence that after this, some elements associated with anti-democratic and illegal practices felt themselves vulnerable and left the country. This was one indication that inside both the party and the state a common class enemy was operating: hence the conjuncture of measures taken in both spheres. An attempt to integrate both aspects in one analysis was made at the comicio popular of June 22, 1982, where the aspirant bourgeoisie and the bandos armados were linked.

During 1982, as part of the same process, measures were taken to reinforce national unity by reintegrating certain sectors of the society which had been marginalized: The comprometidos and the various churches. The main aim of the meetings with these two groups was to demonstrate that, despite past antagonisms, and even betrayals, the post-Independence struggles and achievements had created a new basis for trust and working together. The comprometidos had in a sense exonerated themselves by their patriotic comportment and, in many cases, commitment to the consolidation of the gains of Independence. The meeting with the religious leaders was in itself a struggle for unity, in which certain complaints showed a longing for the restoration of past privileges. The reply from FRELIMO was that all churches are now equal and none can have a special relation to the state.

A simultaneous, but separate, process of building popular support was also in progress during 1982. This process included a series of preparatory steps to analyse the current situation. The first of these steps was the First National Party Conference (March 1982), which laid down priorities in terms of whose voices had to be listened to most carefully. This implied going down to the base, to the factories and the countryside. The top leaders were to guide the discussions, but the contact with the base was at times through channels created specifically for this purpose, thus by-passing where necessary any blockages constituted by bureaucrats operating in an anti-democratic fashion.

The meeting with the antigos combatentes in June 1982 (veterans of the guerrilla war) brought out their denunciation of their own marginalization, of errors in planning and lack of respect for the people. It also stressed the need for a new policy in the countryside. These meetings provided a first approximation to problems which created the conditions for the development of the theses of the 4th Congress. The preparation of the Congress was not only a chance to raise existing problems and discuss possible solutions. It also had a pedagogical impact on the militants and the people in general in terms of how to analyse questions. There were two aspects to the preparation of the Congress: the actual study of the theses and the taking of specific decisions to solve the problems of the masses, and to raise production and productivity.

The public discussions of the theses were exhaustive, covering topics from the economy to the functioning of the party and the state. During such sessions concrete errors and those responsible for them were pointed out, and their causes were analysed. While the theses themselves were not changed by this process, the popular discussions often brought out discrepancies between what was stated in the theses and the actual state of affairs: hence the process of correcting former errors, which occurred during a series of lively debates in the work-places, the like of which had not been seen for several years. As a result the study of the theses re-mobilized a lot of mass support.

This approach to preparing the Fourth Congress can readily be understood to be as an attempt to re-capture the tradition of contact with the people that proved so successful during the Armed struggle. This re-mobilization was carried out on the basis of an analysis of the current situation which was encapsulated in the slogan of the Congress:

" DEFENDER A PÁTRIA
VENCER O SUBDESENVOLVIMENTO,
CONSTRUIR O SOCIALISMO".

cap. 1 The manner in which the Congress proceeded showed the fruits of the mass participation in its preparation by letting the same critical voices which had been heard then, be heard nationally. The Congress concluded by electing an enlarged Central Committee (more than double) which included a greater proportion of peasants, workers and antigos combatentes. This is reminiscent of the events leading up to the Second Congress. During the preparatory stages for the Fourth, the President himself drew parallels with the situation preceding the Second Congress.¹⁸ It can be argued that then as now there were opposing conceptions of how to analyse the contradictions being faced, and of the political and ideological direction to follow.

Cap. X While the concrete problems were obviously different, both Congresses were faced with having to decide on the nature of FRELIMO's power and the means of implementation of that power. Interestingly, both Congresses present similarities not only in the choices, but also in the means of tackling the contradictions. In 1968, the 2nd Congress brought delegates from the Liberated Zones, and among the delegates appeared large numbers of soldiers. In 1983, fifteen years later, a similar tactic prevailed: the largest percentage of delegates was constituted by workers peasants and veterans of the armed struggle.

CONCLUSION:

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As already pointed out, one of the major difficulties in defining the enemy arises from the fact that while there may be agreement on who the enemy is at

the most general level -- such as the imperialists, the international bourgeoisie, the aspiring local bourgeoisie armed and unarmed -- this generalization is insufficient especially in those cases where it does not cope with the concrete manifestations of these enemies either in different places at the same moment or at various moments of the ongoing process.

The enemy, be it the black marketeer, the speculator of today or L. Nkavandame cannot be defined once for all, because it continuously adapts to the changing contexts, to the successes and defeats of the revolutionary process. Thus to combat it effectively would require permanent analytical and political vigilance, devoted to the current situation.

For example, Independence and certain policies of FRELIMO have created conditions for the rapid development of certain kinds of capitalist agriculture and speculative commercial capital. These act on (and perhaps inside) the Party, and state in an attempt to advance their class position. The party and state have yet to confront the issue of the inadvertent support for bandonga (black marketing) which is provided by certain aspects of state economic policies. Thus, one could say that the enemy has been identified but the conditions for its actions have not yet been fully analysed, which could account for the introduction of apparently temporary repressive measures against armed and unarmed bandits.

It is extremely difficult to analyse such issues given the complexity of the changes taking place in the class structure, Party and state. What can be said with confidence is that FRELIMO has had a long tradition of self-criticism which has enabled it to respond creatively to radically new situations by maintaining contact with its popular base. As the President has said: " People's power is a school without teachers".

NOTES:

- 1) M. Wuyts, "Economia Política do Colonialismo Português em Moçambique". See Estudos Moçambicanos, CEA, UEM (1) 1980, and M. Wuyts Camponeses e Economia rural em Moçambique, Maputo: INLD, 1981 where this has been discussed. However, this paper proposes a somewhat different analysis, more in line with Y. Adam, A. M. Gentili. "As cooperativas Ligualanilu de Mueda," Estudos Moçambicanos, CEA, UEM (4) 1983, in press. The different analysis proposed here is mainly because the first article relied heavily on Portuguese colonial statistics which do not register migrant labour from the North to Tanganyika, Migrant labour to South Africa was registered because of the government agreement. The emphasis on migrant labour in the North comes as a result of field work in Cabo Delgado.
- 2) See J. Head, "A Sena Sugar Estates e a mão-de-obra migratória," Estudos Moçambicanos, CEA, UEM Maputo 1980, (1). Contracted labour, meant in fact a kind of forced labour, different from xibalo which was direct forced labour for the State, usually on road construction. There was also migrant labour to neighbouring countries such as Northern and Southern Rhodesia, Nyassaland and Belgian Congo.
- 3) J. Head, R. Davies, Y. Adam, "Mão-de-obra Moçambicana na Rodésia do Sul", Estudos Moçambicanos, CEA, UEM (2) 1981. J. Head and D. Hedges, "Problemas de História da Zambézia", review of Leroy Vail and Landeg White, Capitalism and Colonialism in Mozambique (London, Heineman, 1980) in Estudos Moçambicanos, (4) 1983, in press.
Centro de Estudos Africanos, Plantações de Chá e Economia Camponesa, relatório do CEA 1982.
- 4) Não Vamos Esquecer, boletim informativo da Oficina de História, CEA, UEM (2/3) and (4) forthcoming. It should be noted that in both the South African mines and the Tanganyika sisal estates, Mozambican workers were given the hardest tasks.
- 5) This phenomenon was clearly analysed by S. Machel in his critique of E. Libombo during the meeting with the comprometidos (collaborators) in May 1982.
- 6) See Não Vamos Esquecer, (1) 1983 and (4) 1983 forthcoming. Also Y. Adam and A. M. Gentili. "As Cooperativas Ligualanilu de Mueda", Op. Cit.

* The most dominant interpretation is that FRELIMO was unprepared.

- 7) In retrospect, this question of "how" is crucial because of the various interpretations that have been given to the problems faced by FRELIMO at the time of the April 1974 coup in Portugal.* FRELIMO may have been unprepared for the timing of the event, but ever since 1962, there were forces within it which had been preparing for the post-colonial period, because for that group the crucial question was not solely the defeat of Portuguese colonialism, but how it had to be defeated, and what kind of society was to replace it.
- 8) Interview with Aquino de Bragança, January 1969.
- 9) See U.T. Simango, The Gloomy Situation in Frelimo, Dar-es-Salaam, 3/11/1969, written soon after the Third Central Committee meeting.
- 10) See Não Vamos Esquecer, (4) 1983 forthcoming.
- 11) See Consolidemos aquilo que nos une, Coleção Unidade Nacional (1), 1983; and also, President Samora Machel's intervention during the 11th Session of the Popular Assembly in April 1983.
- 12) These were later returned to private traders in all areas, except the former Liberated Zones, as part of a decision to concentrate state resources on the wholesale rather than the retail sector of commerce.
- 13) "O partido nasce da nossa luta", Notícias, 23 Abril 1978.
- 14) For a discussion of these issues, see M. Wuyts, "A organização das finanças e o desenvolvimento económico em Moçambique: Do sistema capitalista-colonial ao desenvolvimento socialista" Textos de Apoio, nº105, (n.d., Janeiro 1983), UEM, CEA.
- 15) See Ruth First, Black Gold, Harvester Press, forthcoming.
- 16) "Ofensiva política e organizacional" Voz da Revolução (73) Junho 1981.
- 17) See 11th Session of the Popular Assembly, April 1983.
- 18) See 11th Session of the Popular Assembly, April 1983.